



The Senate of The State of Texas

Senator José Menéndez

District 26

October 8, 2018

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Air Quality Division
Implementation Grants Section, MC-204
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087
ATTN: VW Settlement

Re: Comments pertaining to the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Draft Beneficiary Mitigation Plan for Texas

Dear Commissioner Niermann,

We write to you to express our support and enthusiasm about the opportunity for the City of San Antonio to take a meaningful step toward cleaner air. With significant funding now available from a settlement by Volkswagen after it was found to be in violation of the Federal Clean Air Act, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has issued a plan to lower nitrogen oxide vehicle emissions that pollute the air and produce ground-level ozone. This plan has our full support.

Bexar County is currently 2 parts per billion short of attaining the national air quality standard of 70 parts per billion of ground level ozone. We have a deadline of 2020 to comply with the standard or face stricter regulations that could significantly hurt our economy. With \$73 million, or 35 percent of the VW settlement earmarked for Texas to achieve this goal, we can make significant progress in reducing dirty air in our city, but we must act quickly.

This mitigation process will be completed through a collaboration between Bexar County and key institutions, including VIA Metropolitan Transit, independent school districts, the Alamo Area Council of Governments, CPS Energy and Joint Base San Antonio. Steps include replacing school buses, electrifying airport ground service equipment, replacing or repowering heavy-duty fleet vehicles like garbage and freight trucks, and expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

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San Antonio's multidisciplinary Air Quality Task Force has put forward all of its resources to combat pollution with an emphasis on public health, environmental sustainability, and the use of new technologies to make transportation, land use and energy more efficient.

We hope that the TCEQ will waive or reduce the match by local government entities so that we can minimize budgetary red tape and meet the federal requirements on the tight deadline we have been given. This is a unique moment in our city to mitigate a problem that affects all of us today and generations into the future.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature of José Menéndez in dark ink.

José Menéndez,

State Senator, District 26

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